PSConnection

Missouri Public Service Commission Publication *VOL. 1 NO. 1 -- Winter 2010-11*

Could It Happen Here?

Natural gas explosions, like the one in San Bruno, CA in 2010, are rare but devastating. The Missouri Public Service Commission has rules in place and conducts pipeline inspections to ensure your safety.

Dramatic Explosion

This photograph was taken by a resident of San Bruno, CA. after a natural gas pipeline explosion rocked the neighborhood, killing four and injuring more than 50 people. *(Photo by Mark Carlson)*

What's Inside

Our Mission

To ensure that Missourians receive safe and reliable utility service at just and reasonable rates.

On The Cover

A law enforcement official walks away from a massive fire in a residential neighborhood September 9, 2010 in San Bruno, California. A huge explosion rocked a neighborhood near San Francisco International Airport. (Photo by Justin Sullivan / © Getty Images)

Chairman's Corner

"MYSTERY OF THE PSC"

Welcome to the first edition of a new publication from your Missouri Public Service Commission. The PSC in recent years is trying harder to provide you quality information on issues involving Missouri investor-owned utilities. Many people have heard about the PSC, but most are not aware of what we do and how the decisions we make affect you.

This magazine is designed to highlight a few of the responsibilities we have while also explaining our process. Utility issues are not among the most exciting to read about, so we have taken steps to make the information "user friendly" and attempt to take the "mystery" out of the PSC.

Nearly every Missourian relies on "public services" made available by an assortment of utilities. Rate payers depend on electric, water, sewer and natural gas service to be there when they need it and customers expect that rates will be set at a reasonable level. The mission of the PSC is to ensure investor-owned utilities (such as Ameren, KCPL, Laclede, Missouri American Water, MGE, Empire and Atmos) provide safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates. We carry out that mission with experts such as accountants who audit utility books; we have engineers that evaluate utility plans for investment and expansion of infrastructure; and we have financial analysts who calculate appropriate rates of return that are fair to the company and to the ratepayer.

This issue highlights the PSC's number one priority: safety. The first of three articles explain what the PSC is doing to make sure to avoid natural gas explosions, like what was seen in California. The second article highlights advances in electrical safety and reliability to make sure that the lights stay on, even during bad weather. Lastly, as winter weather approaches, the third article highlights how customers, including vulnerable customers, stay warm through the season.

I want to thank the editorial staff for all of their hard work in compiling our first edition. My colleagues and I hope that you enjoy our first issue. Please share with us your comments and suggestions for improvement.

Just remember, at the Missouri PSC, *"Service is our middle name!"*

Robert M. Clayton III

PSConnection

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The Missouri Public Service Commission regulates investor-owned electric, steam, natural gas, water and sewer and telephone companies. Its mission is to ensure Missouri consumers have access to safe, reliable and reasonably priced utility service while allowing those utility companies under our jurisdiction an opportunity to earn a reasonable return on their investment. The PSC also regulates manufacturers and retail dealers who sell new and used manufactured homes and modular units. The Commission was established in 1913. The PSC is comprised of five commissioners, who are appointed by the governor.

The remains of an office building explosion in Jefferson City in 1988.

DAMAGE CONTROL

Series of natural gas explosions in 1988 led to tougher pipeline inspection standards by The Missouri Public Service Commission

> "That dramatic explosion in our state capital on October 30, 1988, marked the beginning of a winter of crisis in natural gas safety in Missouri."
>
> **PSC Chairman William D. Steinmeier in an August 1, 1991, article in *Public Utilities Fortnightly.***

By Dale Johansen

On that chilly early morning, the reality of the dangers of natural gas distribution systems – the safety of which is routinely taken for granted – hit hard in our state capital. At about 5:30 a.m., a leak from a fractured cast iron natural gas main ignited in an office building on the 400 block of Jefferson Street, turning that building into smoldering rubble. Adjacent apartment buildings were also severely damaged and were ultimately razed. Fortunately, and perhaps miraculously, no fatalities resulted from this accident, but there were 11 injuries.

This accident in Jefferson City marked the beginning of a winter where several natural gas accidents occurred in Missouri. On the day after Thanksgiving, a house blew up in the Hickman Mills area in Kansas City, killing a two-year-old boy and seriously burning his

seven-year-old brother. The source of the explosion was a natural gas line fracture in the threads of a joint in a bare steel, customer-owned service line that was not protected against corrosion. A week later, again in Kansas City, natural gas leaking from a cast iron main was ignited by the retained heat from a parked car's catalytic converter, engulfing the car in flames.

In January 1989, a Fulton home exploded and burned, killing a young boy and his uncle. The source of the natural gas was a corrosion hole in a bare steel, customer-owned service line that was not protected against corrosion.

While the natural gas accidents in Jefferson City and Fulton brought attention and concern about pipeline safety close to home, public concern in the metropolitan Kansas City area actually started in September 1987, when several natural gas accidents occurred on both sides of the Missouri-Kansas border. Concerns were further heightened by the above-noted accidents and reached a new level when on February 10, 1989, a natural gas explosion in Oak Grove resulted in the death of an elderly retired couple in their home.

These incidents made it clear to the Commission and the Commission's pipeline safety staff that additional attention needed to be paid to cast iron and steel mains, service lines and yard lines that were not protected against corrosion when installed. In addition, these accidents resulted in unprecedented actions by the Commission, including the promulgation of an emergency rule requiring all natural gas companies in Missouri to conduct emergency leak surveys over all steel service lines and yard lines not protected against corrosion, and to make immediate and necessary repairs. During the 1989 legislative session, House Bill 938 was passed giving the Public Service Commission the authority to enter certain types of emergency orders with regard to pipeline safety matters and also provided the Commission with safety jurisdiction over the municipally-owned natural gas systems in Missouri.

WHERE WE ARE

During 1989, Commission members, the Commission's pipeline safety staff, the Commission-regulated natural gas operators and other interested stakeholders worked on far-reaching modifications to the Missouri natural gas pipeline safety regulations. Prior to the catastrophic events of 1988-89, the Commission had relied for years on its adoption and enforcement of the pipeline safety regulations promulgated by the federal Department of Transportation's Office of Pipeline Safety.

Charred rubble from a natural gas explosion in Oak Grove in 1989.

Firemen survey the scene of a natural gas explosion in Jefferson City in 1988.

"In promulgating these new rules, it was our goal", Chairman Steinmeier wrote in the *Public Utilities Fortnightly* article, "to achieve the highest standards of safety while assuring the cost-effectiveness of proposed solutions. We were not at all interested in ordering expensive actions by gas systems to create the appearance of solving a problem if those expenditures would not actually provide a commensurate improvement in public safety."

The modifications to Missouri's natural gas pipeline safety regulations, which became effective December 15, 1989, made Missouri's regulations more stringent than the comparable federal regulations in numerous respects, and arguably made Missouri's pipeline safety regulations some of the most stringent in the nation.

For more than 20 years since then, investor-owned and municipally-owned natural gas systems have been required to accelerate leak surveys and prioritize the elimination of various types of piping that have the greatest potential for hazard. As detailed in federal pipeline safety annual reports, these replacement programs have resulted in the following:

* The elimination of almost 1,100 miles of cast iron mains.

* The elimination (replacement or corrosion protection) of almost 1,100 miles of steel mains that were not protected against corrosion when installed.

* The elimination of almost 300,000 steel service lines and yard lines that were not protected against corrosion when installed.

WHO WE ARE, WHO WE REGULATE AND WHAT WE DO

The Commission's natural gas pipeline safety program is run under a cooperative agreement with the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The Commission has jurisdiction over all intrastate gas pipeline operators in Missouri. These operators include four intrastate transmission pipelines, seven investor-owned natural gas distribution utilities (six of which also have intrastate transmission pipelines and all of which have multiple operating districts/inspection units), 42 municipally-owned natural gas distribution systems, one gas distribution system owned and operated by a private company on a Department of Defense facility at Fort Leonard Wood, and three pipeline systems that supply landfill gas directly to customers. The Public Service Commission does not have jurisdiction over interstate natural gas transmission pipelines or hazardous liquid pipelines. For safety purposes, these pipelines are regulated by PHMSA.

In total, the intrastate gas pipeline operators have 105 "inspection units" for purposes of the Gas Safety program's comprehensive annual inspection program, and include 26,682 miles of distribution main, 693 miles of transmission lines and more than 1.5 million service lines.

The Gas Safety/ Engineering Section (Gas Safety Section) of the Utility Operations Division's Energy Department is responsible for the Commission's gas pipeline program. The Gas Safety Section consists of eight inspectors and a program manager.

Gas Safety Staff members are primarily involved in an on-going field inspection program consisting of Missouri-regulated natural gas system operators. In addition, staff performs operation and maintenance compliance inspections, follow-up inspections, construction inspections and gas incident investigations. Staff also conducts safety-related consumer complaint investigations on an "as needed" basis.

So far in calendar year 2010, Gas Safety Staff has conducted approximately 60 comprehensive inspections, five follow-up inspections, eight construction inspections and eight leak survey/investigation inspections. These inspections have resulted in the Staff being out of the office approximately 550 days, with about 1/3 of those days being spent "in the field" physically inspecting pipeline facilities, conducting construction inspections and verifying leak surveys and leak investigations.

Gas Safety staff reports probable violations it finds of Commission pipeline safety rules to the system operators, who are then responsible for implementing appropriate corrective actions. Most enforcement is accomplished on an "informal" basis between the Staff and the operators. However, if an operator does not take sufficient corrective action in a reasonable time period, the Staff may file a formal complaint against the operator with the Commission to resolve the matter. Such complaints generally include a request for a Commission order directing the operator to comply with the rule in question, as well as a request for authority to seek civil penalties from the operator in an appropriate circuit court.

Stronger Rules by the PSC

Significant modifications to the PSC's natural gas pipeline safety rules adopted in December of 1989 included:

* Requiring operators to address specific work activities in their operation & maintenance (O&M Plan) plans, and requiring operator personnel to review and update the plans on a regular schedule.

* Requiring the training of operation/maintenance/ emergency response personnel, and requiring successful demonstration that all such personnel posses the knowledge and skills needed to perform their assigned work activities, and requiring that all such personnel review the O&M plan on a regular schedule.

* Requiring leak detection surveys be conducted on a more frequent basis with the surveys to be conducted with leak detection instruments.

* Prohibiting the installation of customer-owned service lines and yard lines.

* Requiring tests/checks of customer-owned facilities, such as house piping and gas-fired appliances, before service can be initiated.

* Requiring all newly installed service regulators have full over-pressure protection.

* Increasing the requirements for excavator notification to prevent damage to pipelines.

* Increasing the requirements for public education to enhance the recognition of and response to natural gas leaks.

* Systematic replacement programs and more frequent leak surveys pertaining to steel service lines and yard lines that were not protected against corrosion when installed.

* Systematic replacement and/or corrosion protection programs (that must be approved by the Commission) for steel mains that were not protected against corrosion when installed.

* Systematic replacement programs (that must be approved by the Commission) for cast iron mains.

UNDERGROUND FACILITY DAMAGE PREVENTION

In addition to the gas pipeline safety program, the Commission is quite involved in the state's underground facility safety and damage prevention program. The Commission's involvement in this program is based in great part on concerns about the frequency of excavation damages to natural gas pipelines and other jurisdictional underground facilities, as shown below.

* Average number of third-party excavation damages reported for PSC regulated natural gas pipeline systems:

CY 2006 through CY 2009 – 2,634 annually (about 220 damages/month)

* Average number of third-party excavation damages reported for all PSC regulated underground facility owners (including gas):

CY 2006 through CY 2008 – 11,882 annually (about 1,000 damages/month)

In an effort to address the issue, the Gas Safety Staff has been active in developing proposed legislation to modify Missouri's Underground Facility Safety and Damage Prevention Act (Chapter 319, RSMo) over the last 18 months. To facilitate this effort, the Commission has established a "Working Docket" (File No. GW-2010-0120 in the Commission's electronic docket system) and has held two stakeholder roundtables to receive input on the Staff's proposed draft legislation. This docket, which can be easily accessed through the Commission's website (www.psc.mo.gov), contains background information on the Chapter 319 revision project, drafts of proposed legislation to revise Chapter 319, stakeholder comments regarding the proposed legislation, information about the roundtables that were held and other related information.

In addition to the above-noted legislative activities, the Commission has been awarded PHMSA One-Call Grants for the last three years to enhance public education and awareness about excavation damage prevention in general, and to specifically enhance the public's awareness of the "Call Before You Dig" media messages.

-- Dale Johansen works in the PSC's Engineering and Gas Safety Department.

Go to a neighbor's house and call your local natural gas company to report the odor and its approximate location. Calling from a phone inside your home could create a spark that could cause an explosion.

Evacuate the building immediately.

Do not operate electrical switches.

Do not smoke, use lighters, matches or any other open flame.

Do not start your vehicle if it is in an attached garage.

DID YOU KNOW? -- Natural gas itself does not have an odor — an odorant has been added so gas can be detected if a leak occurs. The odor is similar to the smell of "rotten eggs."

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Visit the Missouri Association of Natural Gas Operators-sponsored website at www.mosafegas.com

In the US an estimated 15,000 emergency department visits and 500 unintentional deaths occur annually due to Carbon Monoxide. Visit www.psc.mo.gov to obtain information to protect you and your family from this silent and odorless killer.

Source -- Centers for Disease Control. Unintentional non—fire-related carbon monoxide exposures in the United States, 2001—2003. MMWR 2005;54:36—9)

Working To Minimize Service Interruptions

Ameren Missouri photo

By Debbie Bernsen and Lisa Kremer

Imagine arriving home one winter night, in the middle of an ice storm, to a street that is totally dark. You enter your pitch-black home and struggle to find the one flashlight that still has good batteries. You attempt to use your cordless phone to call the power company, but the phone doesn't work because it is powered by the very electricity you are without. You are cold, can barely see, and are unable to contact a neighbor or relative, prepare a meal—or even begin a load of laundry! Initial annoyance begins to turn to concern as you think about what the following evening hours may bring.

Dangerous winter storms in December 2007 brought similar circumstances to tens of thousands of citizens in the Show-Me-State.

Many things can cause electrical outages, including ice and wind storms, lightning, equipment failures, car accidents, unchecked growth of trees and plants near power lines, and even wandering animals can disrupt the electrical power we all depend upon. Outages caused by weather are the most common, and they can place utility service of all kinds in jeopardy—natural gas, water, sewer and telecommunications operations as well as electric.

Missourians are dependent upon electricity in ways commonly thought of and in more subtle ways not often thought about. With the flip of a switch on a thermostat, we heat our homes with electricity or power our natural gas or propane gas furnace. By placing a plug in an outlet, we run necessary appliances such as refrigerators, clothes dryers and washing machines. We keep abreast of current events through our televisions and computers. What was in the past once thought of as a luxury for a few is now a necessity.

Working to Minimize Electric Interruptions

The Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) has taken steps in recent years to reduce the number of outages – both the duration and impact – experienced by consumers of Missouri's regulated electric utility companies. PSC rulemakings that set utility standards have provided the most visible benefits in the effort to reduce electric outages.

Storm preparation is key to keeping the power on

The Commission adopted several rules, effective in June of 2008, that are designed to increase service reliability for customers of Missouri's investor-owned electric utilities. These rules were developed following weather-related outages during the summer of 2006 and winter of 2007 and are in direct response to customer concerns regarding the reliability of electric service.

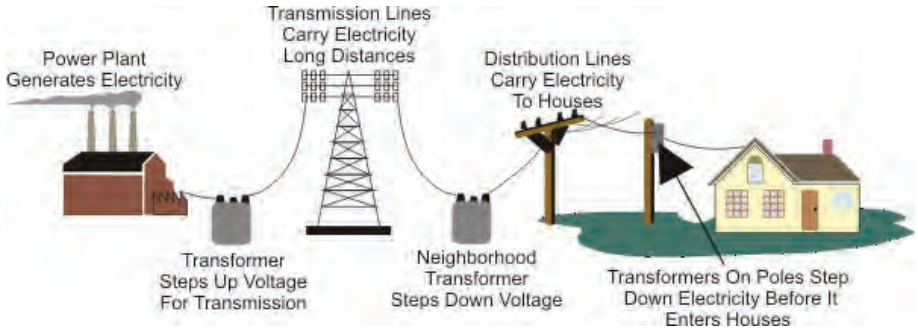
A new rule regarding vegetation management requires companies to adhere to industry wide tree-trimming standards. Companies must conduct trimming and other methods of vegetation management on a regularly scheduled basis to ensure that defined clearances are maintained around power lines. This rule also directs companies to perform visual inspections of all of their facilities between the scheduled trimmings. This work is performed according to standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the National Electric Safety Code. Annual reports are then filed with the Commission and reviewed by the Commission's Staff to ensure utility company compliance.

Detailed Inspections

Another new rule focuses on the condition of the electric facilities and requires companies to perform visual, detailed and intensive inspections on their utility poles, wires, transformers and underground equipment based upon a specific

Empire District Electric Co. photo

A worker repairs a powerline following a 2010 ice storm in Joplin.



How electricty gets to your house

Source: National Energy Education Development Project

schedule. This rule helps to ensure that every company has a program in place to inspect, and if need be, perform necessary maintenance or replacement of facilities.

Tracking Outages

An additional rule that became effective in July of 2008 requires electric companies to compile and file customer-specific and system-wide information on outages annually with the PSC. This rule was designed to further increase electric service reliability by identifying and prioritizing the areas that have encountered repeated outages in the past. The rule then requires companies to take actions to improve the performance of their electric facilities.

Other ongoing PSC activities in this area include the performance of comprehensive investigations of Missouri regulated utilities' storm preparation and service restoration activities. These investigations, conducted by the Commission's Staff, include a detailed review and analysis of both utility preparation prior to an outage and the company's outage restoration activities. These investigation reports provide recommendations to utilities when appropriate.

Staff investigations include analysis of the utility's planning, storm impacts, restoration actions, actions to prevent future outages, call center and communication operations during an outage. Subsequent to the issuance of its findings and recommendations, Staff follows up with the utilities to determine whether they are implementing the recommendations. Investigation activities have included formal proceedings before the Commission, workshops to share successful practices and processes to prevent or minimize future outage durations and severity, and local public hearings to allow the Commission to hear live testimony from customers who experienced service disruptions. Reports are public and accessible on the PSC's website: www.psc.mo.gov.

The PSC tracks and monitors customer outage complaints and comments it receives, identifying feedback by category to monitor trends and using the information customers provide to shape utility actions and improvement, where needed. Categories of customer concern can include any number of areas such as safety, tree trimming, repeat outages, utility communication methods such as websites, call centers, and use of the news media. Public communication by the Commission's Public Information and Consumer Services departments is designed to timely inform the public of utility and Commission activities during outages and to support 'outreach' efforts through the release of educational information about what consumers can do to ensure their safety and comfort.

Adding Up The Damage...

The following major material items were replaced in Ameren Missouri's service territory as a result of an ice storm in 2007.

Wire and Cable - 39 miles
Poles - 218
Cross Arms - 575
Switches - 721
Transformers - 94

Actions, Priorities and Plans for Outages and Service Restoration

Missouri's regulated utilities have formal, detailed plans in place that provide direction for responding to outages when they occur. Each company's plans have been provided to and reviewed by the Missouri Public Service Commission. Having such plans and identified organizational resources and responsibilities is critical to restoring power as safely and as quickly as possible for the greatest number of customers. Such plans may include: planning for shelter and food for lineman coming from outside the area; preparing trailers stocked with necessary materials to be transported to outage areas; developing critical contact information; developing activity checklists; and ensuring customer communication.

Utility infrastructure used to transmit electric power is categorized into two primary systems: Transmission and Distribution. Transmission lines, substations, distribution feeder circuits, sub-feeder circuits and individual consumer services are all evaluated for priority of restoration during an outage. During extended or widespread outages, utilities may call upon the manpower of utilities from nearby communities, states and regions across the country if necessary.

-- Debbie Bernsen and Lisa Kremer work in the PSC's Engineering and Management Services Department

Like a Good Scout – Always Be Prepared

Having an emergency plan in place, like the utilities themselves, is a big first step and can provide you and your family some reassurance if an outage does occur. There are several things customers can do and should know so they can be prepared in case of an electrical outage. They include:

-- Posting emergency telephone numbers in an accessible place. Telephone numbers should include utility phone numbers, family, friends or neighbors that may need to be contacted during an outage, as well as law enforcement and medical personnel.

-- Preparing a 'storm kit'. Such kits could include flashlights and batteries, a battery powered radio, a non-electric powered alarm clock, a supply of bottled water, non-perishable foods that do not require heating, blankets or bedding, first aid supplies and medications, a hand operated can opener, special items for specific family needs such as infants or elderly, hand tools such as a screwdriver, scissors, duct tape, plastic, paper, waterproof matches and bleach. Identification and copies of important documents should also be maintained.

-- Developing a plan for shelter and ensure that all family members are familiar with the plan.

-- Determining if anyone in your household may need to be on the utility company's Medical Registry. Many regulated utilities maintain a medical equipment registry for those customers with significant medical conditions. These registries are typically for customers who are homebound and rely on medical or life support equipment. Upon the customer and physician providing verification of the medical condition, the information will be maintained in the Company's records. In some cases, these customers may be provided with a specific dedicated phone number to report an outage they may experience. While being placed on a utility's medical registry may not guarantee a priority of restoration, it does provide information to the utility regarding unique needs in its service territory that can be used for additional Company outreach efforts.

-- Notifying your electric company if you have installed or plan to install back-up generation of any kind. Portable generators can be dangerous to utility workers and customers if they are not installed properly. The National Electric Code (NEC) requires that the installation of portable generators include a safety disconnection switch that prevents the generator from "back-feeding" power into the utility lines. Such back-feeding could result in damage to the customers or neighbors property or present a safety hazard to a utility working on power lines.

Cold Weather Rule Helps Prevent Shut-Offs

By Contessa Poole-King

Did you know that if you or someone you know is struggling financially and is without heat in their home or having difficulty paying the utility bill this winter there's a law that could help keep the house warm? The Missouri Public Service Commission's Cold Weather Rule (CWR) may be able to help keep the house warm or get the heat turned on by providing an option to enter into a more lenient payment arrangement with the natural gas and electric company.

From October 1 to November 15, 2010, the Public Service Commission's Consumer Services Department handled over 330 calls from consumers regarding the restoration of their utility service for the winter heating season.

"Once temperatures start to drop, consumers realize the importance of restoring their heating services for health and safety purposes," said PSC Consumer Services Department Manager Gay Fred. "Lower evening temperatures tends to increase the number of people calling our department requesting assistance with re-establishing heating service."

Fred said that "many of those who contact our office are seeking help in paying their utility bills." She noted that "although we don't have energy assistance funds at the Public Service Commission, we can provide valuable contact information to help them in their efforts to seek financial help."

From November 1 to March 31, qualified residential customers can maintain or restore heat related utility service for less than the full amount owed simply by contacting the utility company; declaring an inability to pay the bill in full; making a minimum payment; and establishing a Cold Weather Rule payment agreement with their utility provider. The rule allows customers to budget payments over 12 months, extend payment of preexisting arrears over a reasonable period beyond 12 months and if the payment agreement is kept, a deposit is not required.

The Missouri Public Service Commission adopted the Cold Weather Rule in 1977 to protect the health and safety of residential customers. Since that time the rule has helped over two million Missourians. In addition to promoting customer friendly payment terms, the rule places restrictions on disconnecting and refusing to provide heat related service from November 1

through March 31 due to delinquent customer accounts. For elderly and disabled customers who register with the utility company and who make a minimum payment, service disconnection during the cold winter months is prohibited.

The rule also prohibits the disconnection of heat-related service when the National Weather Service predicts the temperature will drop below **32** degrees during the following **24-hour period**. However, if you are already disconnected the utility company is not required to reconnect your service if the temperature drops below 32 degrees.

Since its inception, the Commission has modified the rule many times to preserve the health and safety of Missourians. Increased volatility of natural gas markets was a large factor leading to the most recent revision.

In 2006, the Cold Weather Rule was amended to provide additional protections for natural gas customers. Natural gas as well as electric customers who have not broken a Cold Weather Rule payment agreement can avoid disconnection or have service reconnected for an initial payment of 12 percent of the total amount due under the budget plan, unless the utility and the customer agree to a different amount.

For a customer who has broken a Cold Weather Rule agreement, an initial payment of up to 80 percent of the customer's total balance is necessary to maintain or receive heat related service. However, because of changes to the rule in 2006, a natural gas customer who defaults, can keep service by making an initial payment of 50 percent of the outstanding balance or $500, whichever is less, with the remaining amount deferred to be paid in a Cold Weather Rule payment agreement plan over 12 months. A natural gas utility will not be required to offer the more lenient payment terms to keep service on or to reconnect a customer more than once every two years or when a customer has defaulted on a Cold Weather Rule payment plan under this amendment three or more times. In those situations, customers would be required to pay 80 percent of the outstanding balance to keep service or to have service restored.

The Commission's Cold Weather Rule is a required framework for regulated utilities to follow. However, utilities may have other low-income programs or more lenient payment plans beyond those required by the Cold Weather Rule.

For more information about the Cold Weather Rule or utility specific plans contact your utility company or the Missouri Public Service Commission's toll free number at 1-800-392-4211.

-- Contessa Poole-King works in the PSC's Consumer Services Department.

Connect with 2-1-1

United Way 2-1-1 connects people with available community resources and volunteer opportunities. 2-1-1 will connect you to hundreds of services in your community. When you dial 2-1-1, you will reach a trained, caring professional 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, who can provide referrals to valuable health and human services. By dialing three digits you can receive information on:

- Utility and rent assistance,
- Warming and cooling shelters,
- Food pantries,
- Physical and mental health resources,
- Work initiatives,
- Support for seniors
- Support for those with disabilities, and much much more

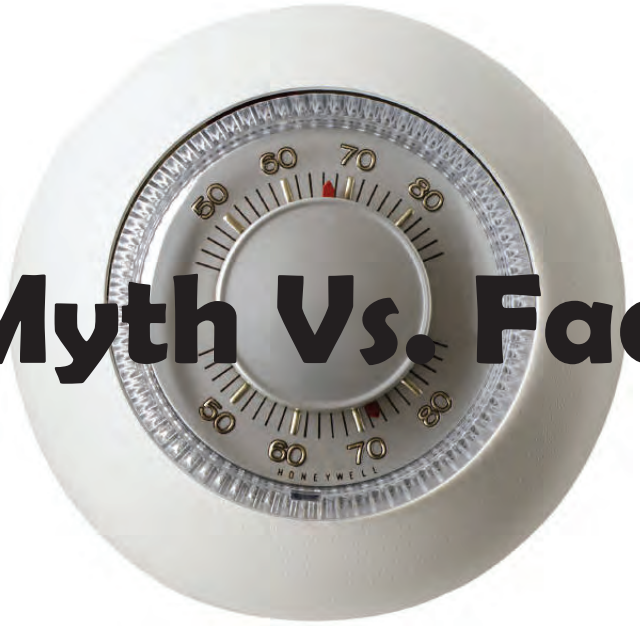
If 2-1-1 is not yet active with your phone provider, you can reach a 2-1-1 call center by dialing **1-800-427-4626**.

For an emergency, please call 911.

Other Assistance Agencies:
Missouri Association of Community Action
- 573-634-2969 –
www.communityaction.org

Since its inception, the Commission has modified the rule many times to preserve the health and safety of Missourians.

Myth Vs. Fact



MYTH: A furnace works harder than normal to warm the space back to a comfortable temperature after the thermostat has been set back, resulting in little or no savings.

FACT: The fuel required to reheat a building to a comfortable temperature is roughly equal to the fuel saved as the building drops to the lower temperature. You save fuel between the time that the temperature stabilizes at the lower level and the next time heat is needed.

MYTH: The higher you raise a thermostat, the more heat the furnace will put out, or the house will warm up faster if the thermostat is raised higher.

FACT: Furnaces put out the same amount of heat no matter how high the thermostat is set — the variable is how long it must stay on to reach the set temperature.

BE ENERGY EFFICIENT

prepare • conserve • save

www.beenergyefficient.org

BEE in Control!

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the typical U.S family spends about $1,900 a year on home utility bills. On average 43% of your utility bill goes for heating and cooling.

Don't let high energy bills get you down, take control, BEE in control. Log on to www.beenergyefficient.org for no cost, low cost and long-term energy savings tips for you and your family.

Restoring power near Baxter Springs, Mo. -- December 2007

Empire District Electric Co. photo

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